



Reading Toolkit: Grade 4 Objective 2.A.4.a

Student Handout: Reading: Grade 4 Objective 2.A.4.a

Standard 2.0 Comprehension of Informational Text

Topic A. Comprehension of Informational Text

Indicator 4. Determine important ideas and messages in informational texts

Objective a. Identify and explain the author's/text's purpose and intended audience

Assessment Limits:

Purpose of the author or the text or a portion of the text

Selected Response (SR) Item

Question

Read this article titled ["The First Freeze-Dried Food."](#) Then answer the question below.

The questions in paragraph 1 *most* help a reader to —

- A. find freeze-dried potatoes
- B. locate mountains on a map
- C. predict what the article is about
- D. understand facts about the author's life

Correct Answer

C. predict what the article is about

Question

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Handouts

The First Freeze-Dried Food

by Mary E. Forbes

¹When you walk into the freezer section of your local food store, have you ever noticed all the different kinds of frozen potatoes there are to choose from? Did you know that potatoes may have been the first frozen food and came from the Andes Mountains of Peru?

Peru is a South American country that farms more than 200 different kinds of potatoes. The potatoes come in many different colors such as purple, white, black, and red. Potatoes are a big part of the Peruvian diet and have been for a very long time. The Spanish Conqueror Pedro Cieza de León wrote the first known history of the potato in his paper "Chronicle of Peru" in 1553. But early Peruvian art shows the potato in Peruvian life as far back as 400 A.D.

The Aymara (Imärä') Indians, who are native to Peru, were the first people to find out how to freeze-dry potatoes. The Aymara call their freeze-dried potatoes "Chuño." After the farming season, the Aymara Indians pick the potatoes that have been planted high on raised landscapes around Lake Titicaca. The raised landscapes look like long, wide steps that ripple down the mountains. The steps are called "Plateaus" and can reach as high as 12,000 feet. The sunshine here is very strong, and the nights are very cold. To make the Chuño, the Aymara people gather the potatoes like their Inca families did a long time ago. They spread the potatoes on a large cloth during the day and cover them with straw. The straw acts as a block from the hot rays of the sun. The heat from the sunshine dries the potatoes and they shrink in size. At night the potatoes are left in the cold air to freeze.

Before the sun warms the new day, the Aymara break the frozen potatoes into smaller pieces by stomping them with their feet. The stomping also helps to remove extra water that is inside the potato. The potato pieces break into different sizes, but most are about the size of a lime. Once the potatoes are smaller, they are left in the sun and the cold for several more days. When the potatoes are totally dried, the pieces are brought to streams and left in running water for a couple of weeks. The running water "washes" the potatoes and takes away any bad taste and potato skins that may be left behind. Once the potatoes are washed, they are left outside until completely dried. The dried potatoes are very light and the Aymara can easily carry this food with them. Potatoes freeze-dried this way may also be saved for many years without using a freezer or refrigerator.

REFERENCES:

Cieza de León, Pedro – "Chronicle of Peru," The Illustrated Columbia Encyclopedia. 1969.

Potato, white, The Illustrated Columbia Encyclopedia, 1969, Native to the Andes, cultivated by the Inca. A staple food for the Indians in pre-Columbian times and today.

Aymara – The Illustrated Columbia Encyclopedia, Columbia University Press.

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